

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00

HA-05 ACDA-12 DOE-11 SOE-02 DOEE-00 /107 W

-----105717 211146Z /17

O 211050Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 501

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY EDAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

UNCLAS PRETORIA 0962

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, RH

SUBJECT: RHODEISA: SMITH'S INTERIM GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL REJECTED.

REF: PRETORIA 0929

1. THE LOCAL PRESS REPORTS THAT PRIME MINISTER SMITH OFFERED A PROPOSAL ON THE MAKE-UP OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AT A BRIEF SESSION OF DELEGATE HEADS ON FEBRUARY 17. THE PROPOSAL REPORTEDLY IS BASED ON A TWO-TIER ARRANGEMENT, WITH A TOP TIER COUNCIL OF STATE AND LOWER TIER COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. THE COUNCIL OF STATE WOULD BE CHAIRED BY MR. SMITH WITH THREE BLACK AND THREE WHITE MEMBERS. THE BLACK MEMBERS
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WOULD BE THE THREE NATIONALIST LEADERS OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WOULD HAVE EQUAL BLACK-WHITE REPRESENTATION BUT THE NUMBERS WERE UNSPECIFIED. THE CHAIRMAN WOULD BE APPOINTED BY SMITH. THE PROPSAL ALSO CALLED FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT. SMITH'S REASONING IS THAT PARLIAMENT IS NEEDED DURING THE TRANSITION TO PASS A CONSTITUTIONAL ENABLING ACT; TO APPROVE THE NEXT BUDGET; TO PASS

OTHER LAWS DEALING WITH THE INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT, SUCH AS VOTER REGISTRATION; AND TO NOMINATE THE SIXTEEN WHITES TO STAND FOR EIGHT OF THE 28 RESERVED WHITE SEATS IN THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

2. ACCORDING TO SUBSEQUENT ACCOUNTS, IN A FULL DELEGATION MEETING ON FEBRUARY 20, ALL THREE BLACK NATIONALIST PARTIES REJECTED SMITH'S PROPOSALS OUTRIGHT. REPORTEDLY THE NATIONALISTS QUESTIONED SMITH'S SINCERITY IN MAKING SUCH A PROPOSAL. THEY ARE SAID TO HAVE COUNTERED WITH A PROPOSED MINIMUM OF 75 PERCENT BLACK REPRESENTATION ON BOTH THE COUNCILS OF STATE AND MINISTERS. ONE ACCOUNT CALLS THE DIFFERENCES IN THE TWO SIDES " FUNDAMENTAL" AND SAYS NEITHER SEEMS WILLING TO DRAW BACK FROM HIS POSITION.

3. MEANWHILE, MUZOREWA IS REPORTED TO HAVE ISSUED A STATEMENT OVER THE WEEKEND CALLING ON ALL RHODESIANS, BLACK AND WHITE, TO BE PREPARED TO DIE FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THE NEW ENEMIES WOULD BE BOTH BLACK AND WHITE AND WOULD OPPOSE A SETTLEMENT BECAUSE "THEY, THEIR FRIENDS, THEIR COUSINS, THEIR RACE OR THEIR TRIBE WOULD NOT BE IN POWER." HE SAID BLACK AND WHITE MUST STAND SHOULDER TO SHOULDER TO DEFEND THE COUNTRY.

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